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Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-15

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 NSCE-00 /016 R

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DRAFTED BY: NEA/INS:DKUX
APPROVED BY: NEA:ADUBS
S/S-O:PJOHNSON
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O 110325Z JUL 75 ZFF4
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 163213 TOSEC 060094

EXDIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT NEW DELHI 9254 ACTION SECSTATE DTD 10 JUL

QTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 9254

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, IN, US
SUBJECT: ANTI-US ALLEGATIONS IN INDIA AND POSSIBLE CALL ON MRS. GANDHI

REF: A) STATE 161658 B) STATE 161677 C) SECTO 06005

1. I AM SENDING A LETTER TO CHAVAN ON THE PRESS AS PROPOSED IN NEW DELHI'S 9106, WITH CHANGES SUGGESTED IN REF C.

2. I WILL ALSO REQUEST AN APPOINTMENT WITH THE FOREIGN SECRETARY AS SOON AS HE RETURNS TO TOWN EARLY NEXT WEEK TO MAKE THE SAME POINTS ORALLY AS WELL
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AS THOSE SUGGESTED IN REF B. I MAY SEE CHAVAN AT ONE OR ANOTHER FUNCTION IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS, AND IF I DO I WILL INFORMALLY TALK TO HIM ON THIS ISSUE AS WELL, BUT I DO NOT WANT TO MAKE MY ONLY CALLS ON CHAVAN ONES OF COMPLAINT ABOUT THE PRESS AND SPEECHES.

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3. I AM NOT SURE THAT I WANT TO PROTEST THE , BRIEF, AND
WELL-POLICED DEMONSTRATION BEFORE USIS ON JULY 9 AT THIS POINT.
IT IS TRUE THAT UNDER THE EMERGENCY, BY GRANTING PERMISSION FOR
SUCH DEMONSTRATIONS WE CAN INFER THAT THE GOI APPROVES OF THE
PURPOSES OF THE DEMONSTRATORS. ON THE OTHER HAND, WE HAVE NEVER
PROTESTED SIMILAR DEMONSTRATIONS IN THE PAST. WE OURSELVES HAVE
ALWAYS STRONGLY ARGUED FOR THE RIGHT OF PEACEFUL ASSEMBLY AND
WHILE THE INDIANS ARE GRANTING THAT RIGHT IN A PRETTY LIMITED
WAY AT THIS TIME, IT IS CONSISTENT WITH OUR PREFERENCE FOR
DEMOCRACY TO COMPLAIN ABOUT SUCH PEACEFUL ASSEMBLY, AS LONG AS
OUR LEGITIMATE RIGHTS AND PROTECTION ARE BEING ASSURED? I WOULD
MUCH RATHER CONCENTRATE ON STATEMENTS AND COMMENTS BY SENIOR
OFFICIALS AND OBJECTIONABLE MATERIAL IN THE CENSORED PRESS WHERE
IT SEEMS TO ME OUR POSITION IS MUCH STRONGER. UNQUOTE

4. IT IS CLAR TO ME THAT THE PRIME MINISTER IS PERFECTLY AWARE
OF WHAT IS GOING ON. YESTERDAY SHE APPEARED AT A JOINT COMMUNIST
PARTY-CONGRESS PARTY SPONSORED MEETING IN HONOR OF MOZAMBIQUE
AT WHICH THE COMMUNIST SPEAKER BLASTED CIA EFFORTS TO "DESTABILIZE"
INDIA, AND AGAIN HERSELF SPOKE OF INDIA'S BEING "ACCUSED BY
COUNTRIES, WHICH HAVE SUPPORTED TOTALITARIAN REGIMES, FOR ABAN-
DONING DEMOCRACY." SHE OBVIOUSLY HAS HER OWN REASONS FOR DOING
THIS, BUT IF WE ARE GOING TO GET OUR POINT ACROSS TO MRS. GANDHI,
I THINK IT WILL BE USEFUL FOR ME TO DO THIS DIRECTLY WITH HER,
PARTICULARLY IN THE CONTEXT OF THE POINTS MADE IN SECTO 06005.

5. SUCH A CALL ON THE PM WOULD HAVE A NUMBER OF ADVANTAGES
AND SOME DISADVANTAGES. IN PARTICULAR, I RECOGNIZE THAT YOU
MAY NOT WISH SUCH A CALL AT THIS TIME FOR US DOMESTIC POLITICAL
REASONS. BUT I HAVE NOT SEEN MRS. GANDHI SINCE BILL SIMONS WAS
HERE IN MID-APRIL. SINCE THEN I'VE BEEN BACK IN THE US AND THERE
WOULD BE SOME GENERAL LOGIC IN MY REQUESTING A MEETING WITH HER.
IF YOU AGREE, I WOULD PROPOSE TO DO SO NEXT WEEK, IN ORDER TO
PUT SOME DISTANCE BETWEEN THE EVENTS OF THIS WEEK AND A MEETING,
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ASSUMING THERE ARE NO FURTHER DEMONSTRATIONS HERE.

6. IN SEEING THE PM, I WOULD (A) REITERATE THE CIRCUMSPECTION
OF THE USG IN COMMENTING ON THE INDIAN POLITICAL SITUATION;
(B) NOTE DIRECTLY MRS. GANDHI'S POSITIVE REMARKS LAST WEEK
ON INDO-US RELATIONS AND TO STATE THAT WE LOOKED FORWARD TO
FONMIN-SECRETARY MEETING IN NEXT TWO MONTHS; (C) STATE OUR HOPES
OF BEING ABLE TO CONTINUE TO MOVE AHEAD IN DEVELOPING INDO-US
BILATERAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION IN INTERNATIONAL FORUMS;
(D) IN THIS GENERAL POSITIVE ATMOSPHERIC CONTEXT, EMPHASIZE
THE NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF STATEMENTS, SPEECHES, AND ARTICLES WHICH
HAVE APPEARED IN THE LAST TWO WEEKS INCLUDING SEVERAL OF HER OWN,
AND EMPHASIZE THAT IF THESE CONTINUE, THE PUBLIC AND POLITICAL
REACTION IN THE US CANNOT BUT HAVE A DAMAGING EFFECT ON THE
POSITIVE OBJECTIVES WE SEEK.

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7.I RECOGNIZE THAT SUCH A MEETING COULD BE MISINTERPRETED
IN THE US. BUT MRS. GANDHI IS NOW MORE THAN EVER THE PERSON WHO
IS IMPORTANT HERE. EVERYONE HERE KNOWS IT AND MY CALLING ON HER
SIMPLY UNDERSCORES THAT WE KNOW IT TOO. IF WE HAVE AN IMPORTANT
POINT TO MAKE, SHE IS THE PERSON TO WHOM IT MUST BE MADE. IF
THE QUESTION ARISES AS TO WHETHER WE ARE EXPRESSING OUR APPROVAL
OF HER SUBORDINATION OF DEMOCRACY BY SUCH A CALL, ALL WE CAN
SAY--AND I THINK IT IS NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH--IS THAT MRS.
GANDHI IS THE LEADER OF INDIA AND THE AUTHORITY WITH WHICH
THE US DEALS IN RELATIONS WITH THIS COUNTRY.

8. MY VISIT WITH MRS. GANDHI WOULD BE POLITICALLY ADVANTAGEOUS
TO HER, AND I THINK SHE WOULD WELCOME THE VISIT EVEN IF
SOME OF THE SPECIFIC THINGS I SAY ARE NOT SO PALATABLE. THE
CALL WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY RECEIVE PUBLICITY. WE WOULD
SUGGEST THE PRESS BE TOLD ONLY THAT THE MEETING WAS TO DISCUSS
MATTERS OF MUTUAL INDO-US CONCERN.

9. IF A DECISION HAS BEEN MADE, I THINK THAT THIS MAY ALSO BE
THE OCCASION ON WHICH TO INFORM MRS. GANDHI THAT THE PRESIDENT'S
SCHEDULE WILL NOT ALLOW HIM TO COME TO ANY OF THE SOUTH ASIAN
COUNTRIES THIS YEAR. I WOULD PROPOSE TO PUT THIS INFORMATION IN
THE CONTEXT OF PARA 6(B) ABOVE. THERE WAS A STATE DEPT OFFICER
DISCUSSION WITH A N.Y.TIMES OR WASHINGTON POST CORRESPONDENT
SEVERAL DAYS AGO WHICH HINTED THAT THE PRESIDENT MIGHT NOT BE
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COMING, AND I THINK IF THAT IS THE CASE, IT WOULD BE PREFERABLE
TO GET THIS TO THE PM SOONER RATHER THAN LATER WHEN IT MAY GET
TANGLED UP BY PRESS SPECULATION WITH WHAT IS HAPPENING HERE IN
THE LEAST HELPKUL WAY. I NATURALLY WILL EMPHASIZE THAT THE PRE-
SIDENT IS NOT COMING TO THIS AREA AS A WHOLE, AND THAT HE IS
NOT SIMPLY BY-PASSING INDIA. MRS. GANDHI MAY, IN ANY EVENT,
DRAW THE CONCLUSION THAT THERE IS A DIRECT CONNECTION WITH HER
EMERGENCY ACTIONS. BUT I THINK THAT CAN BE SUBSTANTIVELY TEMPERED
IF I CAN INDICATE THAT THE PRESIDENT WILL HOPE TO RESCHEDULE
HIS VISIT FOR NEXT YEAR, AND DO THIS IN THE CONTEXT OF A RENEWAL
OF THE SECRETARY'S ANTICIPATION OF MEETING WITH CHAVAN IN SEP-
TEMBER.

9. I REALIZE THIS LAST MAY BE TOO MUCH TO LOAD THE BOAT WITH
AT THE PRESENT TIME BUT WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR THOUGHTS IN ANY
EVENT. I AM SENDING A SEPARATE MESSAGE ON THE PLANS WE HAVE JUST
LEARNED OF FOR A US NAVAL TASK FORCE TO COME INTO THE INDIAN
OCEAN ONE WEEK FROM TODAY. IK THAT STAYS ON THE TRACK, AND I
HOPE IT DOESN'T, I THINK IT WILL BE PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT TO
SEE MRS. GANDHI PERSONALLY IN AN EFFORT TO DEFLECT WHAT MAY BE
HER IMMEDIATE HIGHLY NEGATIVE REACTION.
SAXBUNQUOTE INGERSOLL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 26 AUG 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TOSEC, PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS, INTERVENTION, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, ANTIAMERICAN FEELING, ALLEGATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 11 JUL 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: KelleyW0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE163213
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: NEA/INS:DKUX
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: 11652 GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: D750239-0418
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t197507105/baaaaoyn.tel
Line Count: 162
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: KelleyW0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 06 AUG 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <06 AUG 2003 by ElyME>; APPROVED <26 NOV 2003 by KelleyW0>
Review Markings:

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US Department of State
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06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: n/a
TAGS: PFOR, PINS, IN, US
To: SECRETARY
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006